

2018 Current Fiscal Year Report: Forestry Research Advisory Council

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1. Department or Agency

Department of Agriculture

2. Fiscal Year

2018

3. Committee or Subcommittee

Forestry Research Advisory Council

3b. GSA Committee No.

1282

4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?

No

5. Current Charter

09/01/2015

6. Expected Renewal Date

09/01/2017

7. Expected Term Date

8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

No

8b. Specific Termination Authority

8c. Actual Term Date

9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Continue

10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

Not Applicable

10b. Legislation Pending?

Not Applicable

11. Establishment Authority Statutory (Congress Created)

12. Specific Establishment Authority

16 U.S.C. 582a-4

13. Effective Date

10/10/1962

14. Committee Type

Continuing

14c. Presidential?

No

15. Description of Committee National Policy Issue Advisory Board

16a. Total Number of Reports

No Reports for this Fiscal Year

17a. Open Meetings and Dates 0 17b. Closed Meetings and Dates 0 17c. Partially Closed Meetings and Dates 0 17d. Total Meetings and Dates 0

No Meetings

	Current FY	Next FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$25,000.00
18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$39,600.00
18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)	\$0.00	\$400.00
18d. Total	\$0.00	\$65,000.00
19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)	0.00	0.30

20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?

The Forestry Research Advisory Council (FRAC) has a mandate to provide the Secretary of Agriculture with recommendations and advice on forestry research, funded by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) (formerly Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service) and by USDA's Forest Service (FS), in the context of emerging issues in the forest sector. The Council also has a mandate to serve as a forum for forestry research prioritizing and as a voice for forestry research needs and accomplishments to decision-makers influencing policy, programs, and budgets throughout the forest sector. The Council has addressed its mandated obligations this year by holding a general meeting to evaluate, assess, plan, network, and prepare a full report for the Secretary of Agriculture. The Council Chair made a follow-up visit to the Under Secretaries for Research, Education, and Economics and the Natural Resources and Environment.

20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?

The Council is comprised of 20 voting members appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture and drawn from Federal and state, university (school of forestry), forest industry, and non-governmental organizations. Members serve on the Advisory Council for 3 years, but may be reappointed for a total of up to 6 years to foster carryover of experience, to continue leadership responsibilities and to strengthen the Council's ability to advise.

20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?

The Council recommends that two, 2-day meetings take place annually to provide sufficient time for FRAC members to be fully informed and to develop sound and useful recommendations. The timing of the meetings is crucial to providing timely advice to the Secretary of Agriculture, particularly as related to budget. Meetings with such a diverse group of members are relevant in providing perspectives that permeate a broad range of forestry research priorities and coordinate USDA work with the forestry research programs in universities, industry, and other Federal and state agencies.

20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?

The Council is the only entity which is authorized by law to provide the Secretary of Agriculture with recommendations and advice on forestry research. The increases in worldwide demand for wood, biofuel and fiber, coupled with increasing national and global concerns for the health of forest ecosystems, and increased numbers and magnitude of fires, is causing unprecedented conflicts over allocation, use, and management of the nation's federal forests. The Council discussed results from the recent review of the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program, which continues to be a highly

leveraged and productive investment of public funds; and made recommendations to increase the number of forest-related stakeholders on USDA federal advisory committees including National Agriculture Research and Education, Extension, Economics Advisory board, Biomass Research and Development Technical Advisory Committee, and others. The Council also recommended strengthening USDA research investment in Forest Service R&D and strategic thinking about knowledge retention strategies, upcoming retirements, and workforce planning; exploring joint appointments with non-federal research institutions, and increase coordination between Experimental Forests and Ranges, universities, state and other research forests on designs of new data standards, access protocols, and information management systems to improve interoperability of data and leverage data collection efforts with others.

20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?

All Council meetings are open to the public and are advertised at least 15 days in advance in the Federal Register.

21. Remarks

The Forestry Research Advisory Council (FRAC) charter expired September 1, 2017 and is pending renewal. There was no advisory committee activity in FY18.

Designated Federal Officer

Tracy C Hancock Designated Federal Officer

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Alexander, John	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Executive Director, Klamath Bird Observatory	Representative Member
Evans, Alexander	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Research Director - Forest Guild	Representative Member
Finkral, Alex	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Senior Forester - Forest Land Group	Representative Member
Holter, Lance	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Owner - Lance Holter Realty	Representative Member
McCullough, Deborah	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Professor - Michigan State University	Representative Member
Rodriguez-Franco, Carlos	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Acting Deputy Chief - Research & Development, USDA Forest Service	Representative Member
Smith, Robert	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Associate Dean/Professor - College of Natural Resources and Environment, Virginia Tech	Representative Member
Stanosz, Glen	02/23/2015	02/23/2018	Professor - Tree and Forest Health, University of Wisconsin Madison	Representative Member

Number of Committee Members Listed: 8

Narrative Description

The Council's 2017 Report to the Secretary of Agriculture included recommendations

Enhance USDA extramural and university research capacities in forestry. (1) The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) should utilize its higher education competitive grant programs to provide graduate student fellowships in forest science disciplines with critical shortages. (2) Funding for the McIntire-Stennis program be increased to \$50 million per year to train a diverse cadre of scientists that will respond to expanding threats to the nation's forests. (3) Amending the McIntire-Stennis legislation to include the 1994 land grant colleges should be a priority for the next Farm Bill. Expand Forest Service (USFS) Research and Development (R&D) capacity and funding: (4) Work with Congress to adopt alternative wildfire funding mechanisms and end the use of the ten-year rolling average to drive fire budgeting and end fire borrowing. (5) Restore USFS contributions to Joint Fire Science Program and return the JFSP line item to Wildfire Management. (6) Increase USFS R&D budget to no less than 10% of the total agency's budget by FY2020, to meet urgent needs, e.g., climate change, ecological integrity, insects and disease through expanded research capacity. (7) Invest in social science research beyond rural sociology and economics to better understand how forests address human needs and values. (8) Continue research on forest products and technology that enhances energy efficiency, carbon sequestration, and community and rural vitality. (9) Move quickly to fill the many open R&D executive and national program lead positions.

What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outcome Comments

What are the cost savings associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>

\$100,000 - \$500,000

☐

\$500,001 - \$1,000,000

☐

\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000

☐

\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000

☐

Over \$10,000,000

☐

Cost Savings Other

☐

Cost Savings Comments

The Council did not make estimates on how much savings will be generated with resulting increase in efficiency and effectiveness of program management.

What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?

22

Number of Recommendations Comments

Since the Committee was established in 1962, we do not have accurate information for total number recommendations to date: Total number of recommendations for the life of committee being reported now, starts with FY2014.- FY2014: 3 recommendations- FY2015: 5 recommendations - FY2016: 5 recommendations- FY2017: 9 recommendations- FY2018: No meetings in this fiscal year.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?

27%

% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments

5 recommendations have been completed.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?

68%

% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments

14 or more recommendations are in progress.

Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Agency Feedback Comments

FS and NIFA representatives provide briefings on status of implementation at each FRAC meeting, and intermediate updates as appropriate.

What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?

	Checked if Applies
Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action Comments

Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?

No

Grant Review Comments

How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?

	Checked if Applies
Contact DFO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Agency Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Committee Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online GSA FACA Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Publications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Access Comments